

~~SECRET~~

NSC BRIEFING

23 September 1954

CURRENT SOVIET POLICY AGAINST GERMAN REARMAMENT

- I. Recent Soviet diplomatic moves and propaganda statements show USSR placing heavy reliance on public pressure in Western Europe to force changes, or at least indecision and inaction, in official policies on German rearmament. The method is to drive a wedge between public opinions and governments. Most of the French Socialists and many British Socialists are opposed to German rearmament, at least without very strict controls, while the West German Socialists fear that it will seal the permanent division of Germany. For these varying reasons, these groups favor a new attempt at negotiating with the Soviet Union prior to any final decision on rearming of West Germany.
- II. The 9 September press statement issued by the Soviet Foreign Ministry on European security and German rearmament is most recent example of Soviet tactic.
 - A. It was intended as a clear restatement of Soviet opposition to any form of West German rearmament.
 - B. Its wording shows USSR continues to rely on the French as the principal means of blocking West German rearmament.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-2-

C. It suggests that USSR does not consider any major concessions necessary at this time to head off rearmament. It contains no new substantive line.

III. France: Moscow's aim is to cultivate support of the Mendes-France government for Soviet plans for Germany and European security.

A. Its method is to offer sufficient bait so that the French will be encouraged to continue their search for alternative to West German rearmament, mainly through negotiations with the USSR.

1. Communist concessions at Geneva after fall of Laniel government and French Communists' support of Mendes-France reflect Moscow's intention to rely on French government as main instrument of its campaign to block West German rearmament and integration.

B. Moscow's latest overtures to Paris carefully timed to influence EDC vote:

1. Polish offer, 25 August, of treaty of friendship and mutual assistance.

~~SECRET~~

-3-

2. Soviet ambassador, 26 August, informed Mendes-France Moscow saw large measure of agreement between Soviet and French positions on disarmament. This approach obviously aimed at French elements who see prospect of a disarmament agreement as best excuse for postponing action on German rearmament.

IV. Britain: Moscow regards Left-Wing Labor opinion as most promising field for generating opposition to government's policy.

A. Pravda's 9 September blast at Attlee an attempt to discredit his leadership and qualified support for German rearmament.

B. Moscow expressing approval of Bevanite position on rearmament. During Labor visit to Moscow, Soviet leaders snubbed Attlee, and concentrated their attention on Bevan.

V. Germany: Moscow has attempted to discredit Adenauer's Western orientation by offering West Germans hope of reunification. Aim is to encourage Franco-German hostility and ultimately to bring about reorientation which would substitute reunification for

~~SECRET~~

-4-

Western integration as central objective of Bonn government.

- A. Moscow has repeatedly hammered at theme that EDC or any other form of German rearmament would permanently seal the partition of Germany.
- B. Since Berlin, Moscow has moved quickly to enhance prestige and ostensible freedom of East German regime in order to promote it as a partner for all-German and international negotiations and kindle West German frustration with lack of sovereignty.
 - 1. USSR granted "sovereignty" to GDR on 26 March, abolished all Soviet occupation legislation on political, economic and cultural matters on 6 August, and has encouraged East-West German contacts.
- C. Moscow proceeding cautiously to encourage West German sentiment for closer relations with USSR. Malenkov has expressed support for economic, cultural ties.

~~SECRET~~
~~SECRET~~